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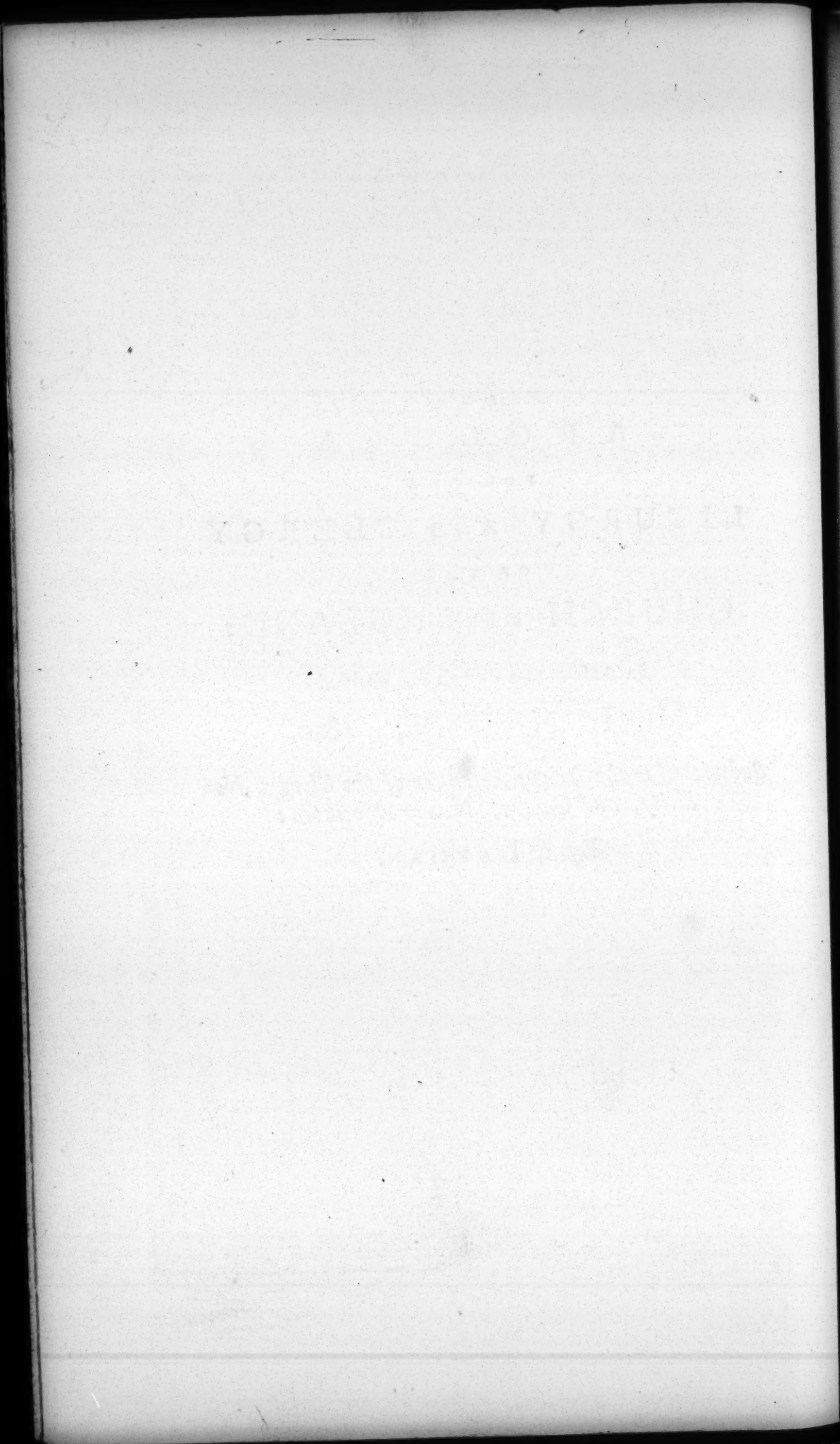
AN  
A P O L O G Y  
FOR THE  
LITURGY AND CLERGY  
OF THE  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

In Answer to a Pamphlet, entitled

H I N T S, &c.

*Submitted to the serious Attention of the Clergy, Nobility, and Gentry, Newly Associated:*

By a L A Y M A N.





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In a Letter to the Author, by

A C L E R G Y M A N.

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He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his Neighbour cometh and seareth him. PROV. xviii. 17.

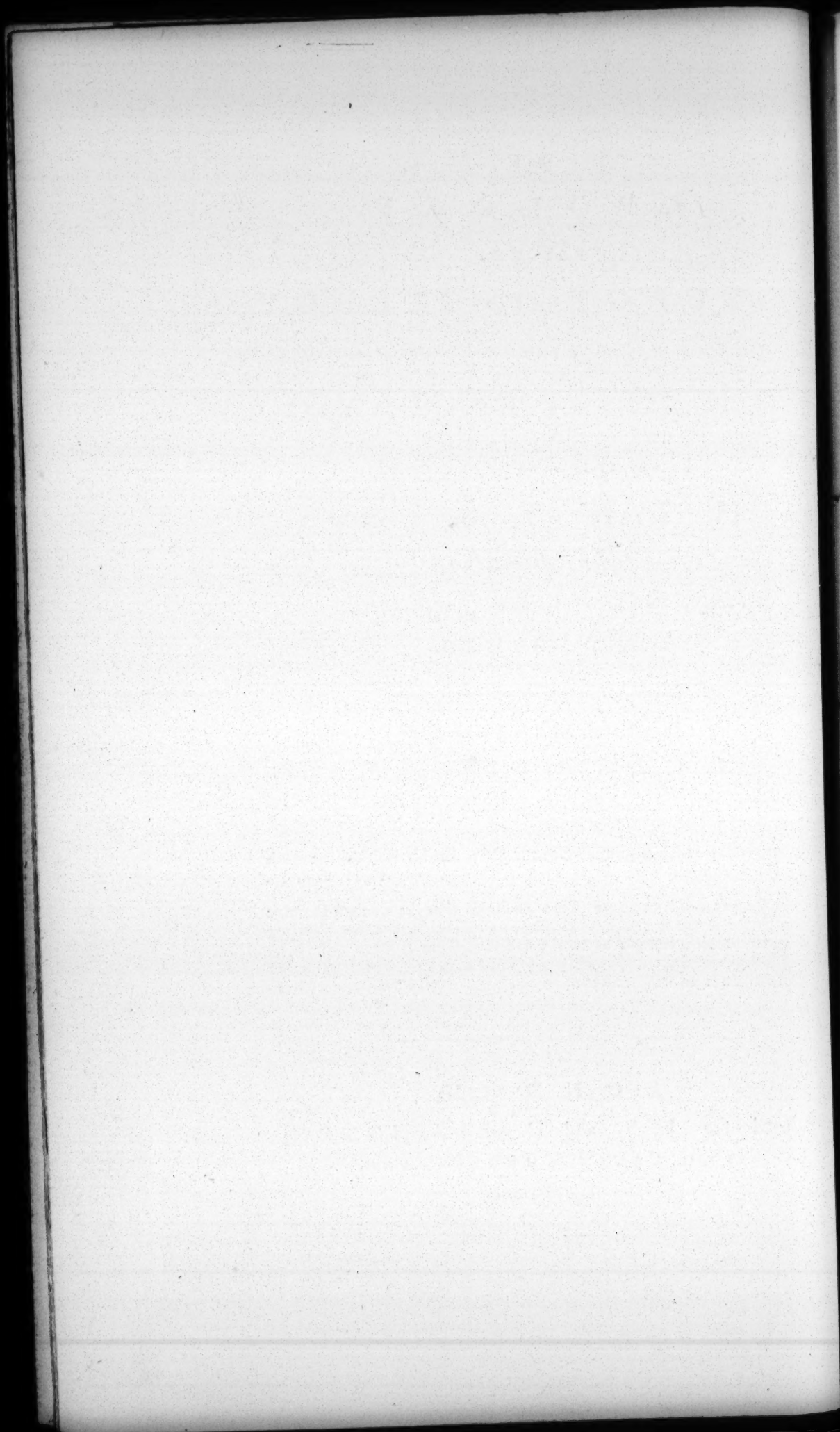
For the CHURCH of ENGLAND, I am persuaded that the constant Doctrine of it is so pure and orthodox, that whosoever believes it, and lives according to it, undoubtedly he shall be saved; and that there is NO ERROR in it, which may necessitate or warrant any Man to DISTURB THE PEACE OR RENOUNCE THE COMMUNION OF IT. CHILLINGWORTH.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for J. F. and C. RIVINGTON,  
in St. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

M. DCC. XC.



A N  
A P O L O G Y  
F O R T H E  
L I T U R G Y A N D C L E R G Y,  
O F T H E  
C H U R C H O F E N G L A N D.

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SIR,

**T**HE Pamphlet, which gave occasion to the following remarks, did not come to my hands till some weeks, or months, I believe, after you had presented it to the world. It often happens to us Country Divines, who reside at a distance from the Metropolis, to be kept in utter ignorance of the publications of the season; and many of them would entirely escape our notice, if some of the Reviews, or Book-Clubs within our neighbourhood, of one or other of which we are most of us members, did not bring them under our observation. In the present instance indeed it might have been expected, that the merits and celebrity of your work would sooner have introduced it to my acquaintance. But so it was, and

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I men-



I mention the circumstance with regret, that, although I am curious in looking after the productions of modern authors, the *HINTS, &c. submitted to the serious attention of the Clergy, Nobility, and Gentry, Newly Associated*, never once fell in my way, till a considerable time after they had been revised and reprinted by you in a second edition.

You have decorated your title-page, and, at proper intervals, your pamphlet, with a few sentences of Latin, on purpose, I suppose, to impress on your readers, as early as possible, an idea of your learning. Without attempting however to avail yourself of this advantage, or to compel our assent by the authority of your name, you assume, without ornament or addition, the simple title of *LAYMAN*. Nor do I in the least suspect the character to be feigned: First, because you were under no necessity of having recourse to a fiction; and, Secondly, because I think it impossible for any *Clergyman* to have put together a string of propositions, so very injurious to his own order, and so greatly detracting from the credit of the Church of which he is a Minister, as occur in your short performance. What other appellations you may claim, as you  
have

have not thought it prudent to announce, I hold it a sort of ill-breeding scrupulously to enquire. You were doubtless aware that, whatever the colour of your life may be, when you condescended to take upon you the form and habit of an Author, you were under a necessity of foregoing every other mark of distinction that may belong to you. The community of letters, you want not to be informed, is a perfect Republic; and no rewards are assigned, in that society, but to those, who are found, after a severe and impartial examination, to have deserved them.

Mistake me not as if I meant, in what I have farther to offer, to treat you or your opinions with incivility or indecent freedom. As I really believe you to be, what you declare yourself to be, *a friend*, as far as your knowledge will carry you, *to the true principles of the Constitution in Church and State*, you have a right to every mark of respect that is due to those who wish well to the cause of religious and civil liberty. I do not imagine, you have so much as once misrepresented any fact, or mis-stated any argument, through ill faith, or with an intention to deceive; but merely for want of sufficient information in the subject, which you profess to discuss. I have only to lament, that, in the cen-

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tures you have cast on the Church of England and its Ministers, you have unfortunately been too much in haste to attend to that golden rule, worthy to be written in the heart of every controversialist, by which you would have been instructed to *understand first, and then rebuke.\**

Without farther preface, then, or apology, I proceed directly to your pamphlet; putting down, with all frankness, the several observations that occurred to me on the first perusal, and in no other order but that which the train of reasoning in the pamphlet itself suggested.

I.

By way of preparing us for what we are to expect, you begin with bewailing, in pathetic terms, *the great increase of profaneness and irreligion within the last twenty years; the indifference that appears in all orders of men for every thing serious and sacred; and the consequences that are to be dreaded, if a speedy stop be not put to the rapid progress of this national calamity.†* And here, I am persuaded, you do but express the feelings and apprehensions of every man, who has any remaining regard for the declining interests of piety

• Ecclus. xi. 7.

† Pages 2, 5, 6.



and virtue. You then insinuate your fears, but with the utmost address and delicacy, and in a manner exactly suited to your plan, which was to

—" HINT a fault and hesitate dislike,"—

that the New Association, avowedly formed for the purpose of carrying into effect the Royal Proclamation against vice and immorality, will probably fail of its end.\* And here, too, I am so happy as to coincide with you in sentiment; as, however I may approve and applaud the design of those very respectable persons, whose names appear at the head of this association, and especially of him, who with unwearied pains and from the purest motives first set it on foot, I own I entertain but slender hopes of lasting good from a scheme, which encourages informations against petty offenders, but dares not meddle with the guilty great, to the baleful influence of whose example are chiefly to be ascribed the enormities of the lower classes of society. You go on to advance, that *the mass of the people can never be brought to a proper sense of duty, till more attention be paid by their betters to religion in general, and to public divine worship in particular.*† Nor am I

\* Pages 8, 9, 13.

† P. 3.

disposed

disposed to dispute with you the truth of this position. Thus far I travel in company with you, with satisfaction and delight: but here, alas! is the parting point, at which I feel myself compelled to leave you: we are arrived at the vertex of the angle of the Samian letter, after which every step we take will remove us to a farther distance from each other: from this place we separate, never to meet more.

## II.

After having said, that no alteration is to be expected in the morals of the common people, till they discover in their superiors a greater attachment to the National Religion;\* your next attempt is to assign the CAUSE of this general neglect. Which cause, in your opinion, can be no other than this; that *certain parts of the Liturgy of the Church of England are so offensive, ill-founded, and unscriptural, that a very large number of persons, (among the LAITY, I presume, you mean,) of the best character and purest principles of religion, are restrained by their consciences from joining in our public worship.*†

\* Page 3, 9.

† P. 3, 10.

And are you, Sir, in earnest, when you attribute to *this*, as the adequate cause, the shameful disregard to religion, which universally prevails? Is there any thing, I would ask, so *very* exceptionable in our service-book, that a serious Christian cannot be present at the reading of it, or offer up his prayers and praises to his Creator, according to the form prescribed by it, without violating his conscience? That some little improprieties, and even trifling mistakes, may here and there be found in it, its warmest advocates have never attempted to deny: but do you need to be told, that the same objection may be made to every form of prayer but ONE in the Christian world? for from blemishes and errors, greater or less, no human composition ever was, is, or ever will be, free. With all its imperfections, the famous *Richard Baxter*, as bitter an enemy to our Ecclesiastical Constitution as it ever had, was fair enough to own, that *almost every Church on earth hath a worse Liturgy than ours: the offensive matters*, which adhere to it, you yourself acknowledge to be but *few*:\* and, if others of the highest reputation for learning may be credited, it abounds with many and shining virtues. And where in a public Ritual the great points of morality are

\* Page 10.



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secured, where nothing is enjoined inconsistent with piety to God and charity to our fellow-creatures, duty, no less than prudence, teaches us to acquiesce in the established forms, rather than separate from the National Church, or attempt to introduce innovations in its worship, some of which are insignificant or trifling, and others cannot be admitted without departing from the principles of the Christian faith.

But, leaving this consideration at present, give me leave to observe, that when you affirm concerning those *highly-respected persons*,\* who absent themselves from the service of the Church on account of certain defects supposed to belong to it, that *their number is very large*;† I cannot but suspect you must be greatly mistaken in the fact. By expressly stating, that, under the description of *irreligious*, you comprehend *every person who does not give proof of his attachment to religion by attendance on some public worship, either of the Established Church or of some other, (of which number [that is, number of irreligious] many WORTHY persons, and DEVOUT ones too, you trust, form no inconsiderable part,)*‡ it should seem that professed Dissenters, those at least who frequent

\* Page 4.

† P. 3.

‡ P. 52.

their

their own places of worship, are not meant to be included in your list : and, leaving them out of the reckoning, the remainder, who *from motives of conscience* refuse to partake with us in social worship, in my opinion can be but small. I am yet to learn, that in any of the parishes in and near the Metropolis, the Churches are deserted, or not so well attended as formerly, on account of exceptions taken against the Liturgy ; and, in my own parish, I am certain, as well as in others round about me, a deficiency of this sort was never so much as heard of. The bulk of the people submit, with much complacency, to the religion of the State ; and, where no undue arts are employed to perplex their understandings, do not usually trouble themselves or their neighbours with theological niceties. As to others, whose consciences are more tender, *worthy persons, and devout ones too,\** they may be ; but not, as I conceive, deserving of particular regard for their numbers, nor yet much to be respected for their abilities : *Very illiterate or very wrong-headed* are the terms by which I should describe them, were not the language a little too strong ; although under those denominations, you are plea-

\* Page 52.

fed to tell us, all the *Clergy* may be comprised, who would continue to read the Athanasian Creed to their congregations, if it were left to their option to use it or not.†

Still it is not to be denied, that multitudes there are, and especially in what you call *the fine world*,‡ who are remarkable for nothing more than an habitual neglect of all religious ordinances. But you know, Sir, and every man of sense knows, it is not from any dislike to the service of the Church of England that this neglect arises, but because they care not for *any* service: *God is not in all their thoughts*;|| the hopes and fears of religion enter not into any of their schemes; the weekly returns of the seasons, appointed for the performance of divine offices, come and go without being perceived, at least without bringing along with them any serious reflections; the hours of the day on Sundays are appropriated to travelling, and the hours of the night to cards; and neither time nor inclination is left for the exercises of public or private piety. Even when some extraordinary occasion compels them to appear at the house of God, their behaviour too plainly shews this is considered by them as matter of

† Page 33.

‡ P. 10.

|| Ps. x. 4.



mere form; and that, whatever be the opinion of the *other* worshippers, they are too wise to think *themselves* at all interested in the business that is going on. Of which perversity of understanding a notable instance, as I have been informed, was seen, no long time ago, in the deportment of a certain person of distinguished rank, who, happening on a Sunday to pay a visit of respect to his Majesty, when absent from his capital in one of his summer excursions, was under the necessity of allowing himself to be carried along with the train that accompanied his Royal Master to Church. His prayer-book, of which probably he had forgot the use, lay unopened before him during the whole service: he stood, like one amazed and out of his proper element; his *eye* wild and wandering, and his stubborn knees refusing to bow, though it were *before the Lord his Maker*. \* Neither the solemnity of the time, nor the pomp and splendour of the worship, nor the presence and example of the Sovereign, nor the sight of multitudes besides of all ages and conditions, in every varied posture of devotion intent on one common object, now engaged in acts of silent prayer and praise, now lifting up their

\* Pf. xcv. 6.

voices, and together with the pealing organ *making a cheerful noise to the God\** of their salvation, were of force sufficient to make the least impression on the mind of this noble visitant, or enabled him to catch so much as one spark from that flame of piety which was blazing all around him. Whether the instance here adduced be a rare one and single in its kind, or whether there be not others whom the same history might suit, I pretend not to determine. In general I am under no apprehensions that what I have said will be censured as an unfaithful picture of modern manners; although I readily admit there are exceptions, a few, even in fashionable life, to whom the above representation will by no means apply; and among those few, notwithstanding what you modestly hint of the *credit* of your own *example*,† I hope, and am willing to believe, you yourself are justly to be included.

### III.

But you have another set of witnesses in reserve, to confirm your opinion of the defective state of our Liturgy, *in matters of faith and worship*,‡ whom one would least of all have expected to

\* Pf. lxxxi. 1.

† Page 1.

‡ P. 35.

have

have seen produced on an occasion like the present; and these are the CLERGY of the Church of England themselves. You are so persuaded of their testimony in your favour, that you take officious pains to remind us of it at every turn. Thus you do not hesitate to assure us, that *certain parts, in the public service and DOCTRINE of the Church, are acknowledged by EVERY CLERGYMAN OF LEARNING AND CANDOUR to be ill-founded and unscriptural*;\* and that NO MAN OF SENSE AND LEARNING *can maintain them*.† Not content with these assertions, for it is too soft a name to call them *Hints*, you have the temerity to say, that *the offensive matters in our service are in fact given up, in the minds of EVERY CLERGYMAN as well as Layman, who without prejudice has considered them*.‡ And again, where you are speaking of the Athanasian Creed, you add, *this is a part of the service, which EVERY CLERGYMAN of the least knowledge and judgment must know to be repugnant to the sacred word of God*: And you desire to appeal to no other tribunal, for a decision of this point, than to the breast of EVERY CANDID AND ENLIGHTENED CLERGYMAN, who would lay his hand upon his heart, and fairly speak out the

\* Page 3.

† P. 4.

‡ P. 10.



*dictates of his conscience.*|| Really, Sir, I cannot help lamenting the infelicity of your situation, which seems to have introduced you to a very odd set of acquaintance, both among the Laity and the Clergy: Of the *former*, some *making use of certain flaws in our religious service as a mere pretext to cover their own backwardness towards an attendance upon it*;† and others, *worthy persons and devout ones too*‡ you are pleased to call them, yet of so nice and squeamish consciences, as not to allow them to be present at the national worship: And of the *latter*, ALL without exception, all of any sense and learning, agreed in breaking through the most sacred engagements; giving up as indefensible, because repugnant to Scripture, certain portions of the book of Common Prayer; (what the portions are you do not specify, but important ones they must needs be;) notwithstanding they have, every one of them, subscribed in writing, and declared in words, and under circumstances of peculiar seriousness and solemnity, and some of them many times over, that this same “book containeth in it nothing contrary “to the word of God.” It was an old saying of the elder Cato, concerning the Haruspices of Etruria,

|| Page 34.

† P. 11.

‡ P. 52.

that

that he wondered how, when one of these sooth-fayers saw a brother of the trade, he forbore laughing;\* from the consciousness, I suppose, that the whole mystery of divination, practised by their tribe, was a mere juggle and imposture: Were I to credit what you have here delivered of the Clergy, I should expect the same risible faculty would discover itself, when two of this profession happened to meet; for they likewise must know, that the credit of their craft is altogether founded on fraud and dissimulation. Seriously, Sir, a more humiliating and disgraceful account of the Church of England and of its Ministers was never offered to the world, by the avowed enemies of both, than is here objected to them by you: And, if your accusation cannot be supported by evidence greater than all exception, you must confess, that, however undesignedly and besides your intention, you have committed a most grievous offence against truth and charity. I have already laid before my readers your sentiments and mine concerning your *lay-friends*; and I am under no pain as to the issue of the enquiry I am about to make concerning those *spiritual* guides, whose opinions you have published,

\* Cic. de Divinatione, II. 24.

as specimens of the general persuasion of their order.

#### IV.

Now, Sir, the first question I would ask is, by what authority you have taken upon you to describe the whole body of the Clergy, those I mean who are of any esteem for their judgment or erudition, as guilty of the shameful prevarication with which you have charged them? As far as your own experience reaches, I give you full credit for the truth of your assertions; but how you have ventured to affirm the same thing of others, with whom and their opinions you have had no previous acquaintance, or by what sort of logic it is that you have been enabled, from premises so confined and particular, to draw a conclusion so unlimited and universal, is beyond my understanding to comprehend. Is there any thing in the CLERICAL PROFESSION, which exposes it more than others to the suspicion of management and artifice? Or is the FACT, as stated by you, so notorious, as not to stand in need of proof? That some who have taken upon them the office of Clergymen of the establishment, and have been among the keenest in looking after the emoluments



ments appendant to it, have so far forgot their engagements as to “ attack the Church from “ those very pulpits in which they were placed “ for her defence; that Church, of which they “ profess themselves Ministers, and whose *wages* “ they continue to take, though in actual *service* “ against her;”\* is not, I fear, to be denied, and your own attestation may evince. Of this description are the persons, of whom we have heard too much,—whether crowned with a mitre, or clothed with a linen frock, their dissimulation is equally deserving of censure,—who, under colour of defending the Unity of the Supreme Being, have laboured to undermine the doctrine of the adorable Trinity; who have affected great zeal in maintaining the Humanity of Christ, that they might combat with better success the arguments for his Divinity; who have allowed in words the Atonement for Sin by the Sacrifice of his Death, and have explained it away into metaphor and allusion; and who, even in the highest order of ecclesiastics, when employed in the most important act of their profession, *the laying on of hands*,† in order to confer the ministerial character on others, have solemnly invoked the Holy Ghost, addressing

\* Dr. Balguy, Disc. VI. p. 106. VII. p. 120. † Heb. vi. 2.

him as a Person, although, in this sense of the words, they did not believe there is any Holy Ghost.\* But it would be to take the very thing for granted which ought to be proved, to produce such men as a *sample* of the order; men who, however extolled by persons of the same opinion with themselves, can here only be considered as equivocal and excentric characters; a sort of prodigies in the moral world; noticed, like other rarities, for their singularity, rather than revered for their integrity: And, to use the words of an excellent writer, “whether their  
 “conduct proceed from a dislike to *all* establish-  
 “ments, or from a desire of erecting a *new* one on  
 “the ruins of that which subsists at present; in  
 “either case, it is contrary to the most evident  
 “principles of JUSTICE and HONOUR.”† If any  
 qualities be indispensibly required to constitute  
 the glory and perfection of the Christian priesthood, simplicity and sincerity must be among the chief; and whoever to his other attainments has added these virtues, which are indeed but the natural effects of that thorough conviction of the sublime truths of religion, with which we must in

\* See an *Essay on Spirit*, by Dr. Clayton, Bp. of Clogher.

† Dr. Balguy, Disc. VI. p. 107,

all reason suppose the mind of every clergyman to be imbued, will be in little danger of deviating into the obliquity of behaviour here complained of, or of incurring the infamy, I had almost said the impiety, of ministring in a congregation, and presenting to God his own devotions and theirs, in a form which his conscience disallows. Here perhaps I shall be told, that it is very possible that a person, who, on his entrance on the sacred office, was as well affected as the best to the doctrines and discipline of the national religion, may hereafter change his opinions, and find himself compelled, on maturer consideration, to withdraw his assent from articles, concerning which before he had no doubt. Still I contend, that, even in these circumstances, the first care of such a one ought to be to preserve his integrity. He cannot honestly persist in an employment, and share the benefits of it, without fulfilling the conditions on which that employment was committed to him: and all that is left for him to do is to cease to officiate in a church, whose principles he no longer approves; to retire from a station, the duties of which, consistently with his past engagements, he is unable to discharge; and, contenting himself with his own singularities in private, nor endangering the public peace by endeavouring to bring over



others to his sentiments, for whom he is now no longer responsible, to carry along with him, what no hypocrite or cunning dissembler will ever be able to obtain, the approbation of his own heart, and the esteem of every one who hears of his sincerity and honesty.\*

## V.

But, leaving Speculations, let us now attend to FACTS; and, selecting some of the most eminent

\* When you assert, p. 34, that the officiating minister is bound *by his oath* to read the different parts of the service according as he is directed, you are under a mistake; for I know of no such *oath*. And here also a second mistake may be noted, which occurs in the same page, where you say, that *every young man, standing for the first degree, is obliged to subscribe the articles*;—at the university of Cambridge, you *must* mean, because you immediately add, that *at Oxford, every youth, even at his first entrance there from school, is compelled to sign them*.—Now, Sir, you ought to have known, that subscription to the XXXIX Articles, for the first degree, in every faculty, at Cambridge, has been abolished, ten or twelve years ago, and another formula substituted, in which the candidate simply professes, that he is a member of the Church of England. From this latter inaccuracy a sagacious observer might perhaps conclude, that it was Oxford, and not Cambridge, that had the honour of giving the finishing hand to the education of the learned Author of the *Hints*.

of

of our Divines, who have appeared since the times of the Reformation, let us see whether *their* judgment, concerning the Liturgy of our established Church, be as unfavourable as yours, Sir, and that of your friends.

The first form of a Common Prayer-Book in England was in the year 1549, in the reign of Ed. VI. which, being thought to retain too much resemblance to the Roman Ritual, was revised by the compilers, assisted by men most eminent for learning in this and other kingdoms, and, the offensive clauses being now removed, was published a second time in the year 1552. In this amended state it was translated into Latin, and by Archbishop Cranmer sent to MARTIN BUCER, then, I believe, in England, for his perusal; whose answer was, that, "although there were some things which  
" by unquiet persons might be forced into mat-  
" ter of contention, there was nothing in it but  
" what was taken from scripture, or agreeable to  
" scripture, rightly understood." The sentiments of CRANMER concerning the merits of this book are well known; but from no circumstance so well, as from that which happened in the year 1553, the first of the reign of Q. Mary; when he offered, if the Queen would give him leave, to prove, and to defend, before the whole world,  
that

that the Order of the Church of England, set out by authority of Edward VI. in his high court of Parliament, is strictly conformable to that which Christ observed himself, and commanded to be observed, and is also the very same that had been used in the Christian Church for fifteen hundred years past. And, as one of our most learned and eloquent writers observes, “ the zeal  
 “ which Archbishop Grindal, Bishop Ridley, and  
 “ other the holy martyrs and confessors, in Q.  
 “ Mary’s time, expressed for this Liturgy, before  
 “ and at the time of their death; defending it  
 “ by their disputations, adorning it by their  
 “ practice, daily using it in time of persecution  
 “ and imprisonment, and sealing it with their  
 “ bloods; are arguments which ought to recommend it to all the sons of the Church of England for ever, infinitely to be valued beyond  
 “ all the little whispers and murmurs of argument, pretended against it.”

One of the first and ablest among the learned in the reign of Queen Elizabeth was Bishop JEWEL, famous in his day as a preacher, but more famous for his *Apology for the Church of England*, written originally in Latin, but afterwards translated into English, and in that language defended by the author against the calumnies



nies of *Harding*. This Apology soon growing into notice, it was translated into various tongues; and the Council of Trent, which was then sitting, thought it of importance enough to appoint two persons to answer it, one in the French, the other in the Italian, language. *Harding's* objections were chiefly founded on the doctrines of Popery, to which, he contended, the Church of England approached too nigh: but others contradicted the received opinions concerning the Trinity, the Procession and Divinity of the Holy Ghost, and the Baptism of Infants; and were the same in substance as those urged by Arians, Socinians, and Anabaptists, whose notions, with other whimsies, were very prevalent in England at the time of its rupture with Rome. My readers will not be surprized to learn, that, notwithstanding all that had been proved in the Apology and the Defence, Papists and Sectaries continued still unsatisfied; but in the judgment of every competent person, in that and the succeeding ages, the victory of our Bishop was complete.

The latter end of *Q. Elizabeth's* reign was memorable for the controversies with the Disciplinarians; a sour and perverse generation, whom no arguments could convince, no kindness soften,  
and

and whose aim, in which they were secretly supported by the Earl of Leicester, was nothing less than to erect their own form of Church Government on the ruins of the English Hierarchy. It was to expose the dangers to be apprehended from this faction, that the venerable, the modest, the profoundly learned, Mr. RICHARD HOOKER was incited, under the patronage of Archbishop Whitgift, to write his invaluable work *on the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*; which contains, besides the general principles of laws human and divine, a defence of the Constitution of the Church of England in all its parts; which its worst enemies have never answered, and never can; and which, as one justly describes it, is “a file of so well  
 “tempered metal as to break the teeth of any  
 “that ventures to bite it.” Among other positions advanced by the favourers of the *Discipline*, as it was called, some related to our Book of Common-Prayer; which, according to the representation given of it by *Cartwright*, the professed advocate of the party, was composed of popish orders and rites, and in many places defiled with the grossest superstition. Our Author, in his fifth book,\* is at the pains to examine and vindicate

\* Book V. § 25—76.

every one of the passages objected to by his antagonist: and let me have leave to say, Sir, your literary fame would have suffered no diminution, had you consulted this book, before you ventured to publish your HINTS. The softest thing I can allege in your favour is, that to the whole treatise you were altogether a stranger. And yet never to have heard of, or never to have looked into, a work of such universal reputation, throughout all the Churches in Christendom, as the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, is hard to conceive, and still harder to excuse, even in a Layman of liberal education; especially in one, who has taken upon him to reflect, in the manner you have done, on the national worship.

Two other authors are quoted by you with applause, because agreeing with you in opinion, with respect to certain clauses of the Athanasian Creed:\* on this matter I shall have something to animadvert by and by: what they thought of the general excellence of the English Liturgy may sufficiently appear from what follows.

The former of these, the incomparable CHILLINGWORTH, as Tillotson was wont to call him,

\* Page 32.



in the early part of his life had left the communion of the Church of England, in which he had been bred, and embraced that of the Church of Rome: but soon recovering from this fall, and principally through the persuasions of his friend Laud, then Bishop of London, he still declined all ecclesiastical preferment, not being able to satisfy himself with the subscription to the XXXIX Articles, required by law: yet afterwards, as is well known, he got the better of his scruples, and complied with the usual forms. However, even during his intermediate state, that is, after his return from Popery and before he subscribed our articles, he declared, in a letter to Dr. Sheldon, that he did “ verily believe the  
 “ Church of England to be a true member of  
 “ the Church, wanting nothing necessary to salvation, and holding nothing repugnant to it.”\* And more explicitly still, in the words already inserted in the title page to this Letter; “ For the  
 “ Church of *England*, I am persuaded that the  
 “ constant doctrine of it is so pure and orthodox,  
 “ that whosoever believes it, and lives according  
 “ to it, undoubtedly he shall be saved; and  
 “ that THERE IS NO ERROR IN IT, WHICH MAY

\* Chillingworth, R. P. See his *Life*, p. vi. Lond. 1742.

“ NECESSITATE OR WARRANT ANY MAN TO DIS-  
 “ TURB THE PEACE, OR RENOUNCE THE COMMU-  
 “ NION OF IT.”\*

The latter author, whom you mention, is the celebrated JEREMY TAYLOR; *the orthodox Bishop Taylor* you call him,† not however, as should seem, by that appellation intending him a compliment. His testimonies to the same purpose are many, too many for me to collect: But he no where delivers himself more professedly on this subject, than in a small volume entitled, *A Collection of Offices or Forms of Prayer*, which this holy man compiled, not in opposition to the Common Prayer, but to supply the want of it; that book, at the time he wrote, being forbidden to be used under severe penalties, in order to make way for a Presbyterian *Directory*. In the preface to this volume he has added a defence of Liturgical Forms in general, and of the Liturgy of the Church of England in particular: and as the book is in few hands, some of my readers, I hope, will thank me for presenting them with the following extracts; which, after they have perused, I am persuaded they will not think too long.

\* Pref. § 40. P. 24. † P. 32.

“ The Liturgy of the Church of England is  
“ in every part as ancient and primitive, as it is  
“ pious and unblameable. Above one half of  
“ it is as divine as Scripture itself; the Psalms,  
“ Lessons, all the Hymns save one, the Lord’s  
“ Prayer, the Epistles, and Gospels. — I cannot  
“ say, but many of its prayers are also in the Roman  
“ Offices; but so they are also in the Scripture,  
“ so also is the Lord’s Prayer; and, if they were  
“ not, yet the allegation is very inartificial, and  
“ the charge peevish and unreasonable; unless  
“ there were nothing good in the Roman books,  
“ or that it were unlawful to pray a good prayer,  
“ which they had once stained with red letters.—  
“ And let me say, it adds no small degree to my  
“ confidence and opinion of the English Common  
“ Prayer Book, that among the numerous armies  
“ sent from the Roman Seminaries, (who were  
“ curious enough to enquire, able enough to find  
“ out, and wanted no anger to have made them  
“ charge home any error in our Liturgy, if the  
“ matter had not been unblameable and the com-  
“ position excellent,) there never was any im-  
“ piety or heresy charged upon the Liturgy.  
“ The truth of it is, the compilers put nothing of  
“ controversy into their prayers, nothing that  
“ was



“ was then matter of question: only, because  
“ they could not prophesy, they put in some things,  
“ which since then have been called into question  
“ by persons, whose interest was highly concerned  
“ to find fault with something.—I shall not need  
“ to procure advantages to the reputation of the  
“ Common Prayer, by considering the imperfec-  
“ tions of that Order or *Directory*, which hath been  
“ offered in its stead; which I suppose is no equal  
“ match to be put in balance against the Liturgy  
“ of the Church of England: Which was with  
“ so great deliberation compiled *out of* the Scrip-  
“ tures, the most of it; all the rest *agreeing* with  
“ Scripture, and drawn from the Liturgies of the  
“ ancient Church, and made by men famous in  
“ their generations, (whose reputation and glory  
“ of martyrdom has made it immodest for the  
“ best of men to compare themselves with them,)  
“ and after its composition considered by advices  
“ from abroad, and so trimmed and adorned, that  
“ no excrescencies did remain: The Rubrics of  
“ which book were written in the blood of many  
“ of the compilers: Which hath had a testimony  
“ from God’s blessing in the daily use of it; and is  
“ of so admirable a composition, that the most indus-  
“ trious wits of its enemies could never find out

“ an

“ an objection of value enough to make a doubt,  
“ or scarce a scruple, in a wise spirit.”—— And  
again, “ Certain it is, there is no part of religion,  
“ as it is a distinct virtue, and is to be exercised by  
“ interior acts and forms of worship, but is in the of-  
“ fices of the Church of England. For if the soul  
“ desire to be humbled; she hath provided forms of  
“ confession to God before his Church: if she  
“ will rejoice and give God thanks for particu-  
“ lar blessings; there are forms of thanksgiving:  
“ if she will commend to God the public and  
“ private necessities of the Church and single  
“ persons; the whole body of Collects and De-  
“ votions supplies that abundantly: if her devo-  
“ tion be high and pregnant, and prepared to  
“ fervency and importunity of congress with God;  
“ the Litanies are an admirable pattern of devo-  
“ tion, full of circumstances proportionable for  
“ a quick and an earnest spirit. When the re-  
“ volution of an anniversary calls on us to per-  
“ form our duty of special meditation and thank-  
“ fulness for the glorious benefits of Christ’s in-  
“ carnation, nativity, passion, resurrection, and  
“ ascension; then we have the offices of Christ-  
“ mas, the Annunciation, Easter, and Ascension.  
“ If we delight to remember those holy persons,  
“ whose bodies rest in the bed of peace, and whose  
“ souls

“ souls are deposited in the hands of Christ till  
“ the day of restitution of all things ; we may  
“ by the Collects and days of Anniversary festi-  
“ vity, not only remember but also imitate  
“ them too in our lives. To which if we add  
“ the advantages of the whole Psalter, which is  
“ an entire body of devotion by itself, and hath  
“ in it forms to exercise all graces by way of  
“ internal act and spiritual intention ; there is not  
“ any ghostly advantage, which the most religi-  
“ ous can either need or fancy, but the English  
“ Liturgy, in its intire constitution, will furnish  
“ us withall.”

Among the friends and admirers of our public worship, may I not also include another person, mentioned by you and by every one with deserved respect,\* for his learned writings in defence of religion, though by some considered of dubious character at least, with regard to the sincerity of his attachment to the national faith ? I mean Dr. SAMUEL CLARKE. That he lived and died in the communion of the Church of England, constantly attending its service, and, so long as health and strength were lent him, assisting in the administration of its offices, will with candid

\* Page 30.



persons be sufficient to induce them to believe, that in the main he approved its tenets, and that his assent to the forms prescribed was given in such a sense, as made them appear to him consistent with themselves and with Scripture. Certain it is, that, in the very book which has been thought most exceptionable, he takes every occasion to condemn the errors of Sabellians, Socinians, and Arians; acknowledging, in the most unequivocal terms, the distinction of three eternal persons in the Godhead, with the separate offices belonging to each in the Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, of mankind; and formally disclaiming the presumption of those who affirm "there was  
 " a time when the Son was not."\* However, be  
 we

\* See his *Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity*, (Lond. 1712.) Propositions 15. 16. 18. 20. 22. 31. 50. 54. In the Introduction to this book (P. xxviii. Ed. 1712.) he speaks of Socinianism as "a diminution of the honour of the Son of God, and taking away the very Being of the Holy Spirit." He rejects the interpretation of John i. 1. which explains *In the Beginning* to mean *at the first preaching of the Gospel*, and *by the Word* understands *the internal Reason or Wisdom of God*, "as forced and unnatural; as if the *Person*, who came to be incarnate for us, and to die for our sins, was nothing but an *attribute* of the Father, without any real and proper *Being*." (P. 85.) So also, where it is said, John i. 3. *All things*  
 were

we right, or be we wrong, in comprehending Dr. Clarke among the genuine sons of the Church of England;—for, with all the reverence I have for his piety and learning, I still think, that in that part of his work where he endeavours to accommodate his own hypothesis to the Liturgy, his expositions have often in them more of subtlety than truth;—he cannot, with any sort of propriety, be supposed to belong to those, who in our days have assumed the name of Unitarians. These, considering Christ as a “mere human being, who had no existence be-

were made by him, i. e. Christ, which by the Socinians is supposed to denote, that the *New Creation was made by him, or all things relating to the Dispensation of the Gospel were done by him*; this sense, he says, is “extremely forced, and “other express texts lead to a *literal* interpretation of this.” (P. 90, 91.) Again of the text, John viii. 48. *Before Abraham was, I am*, which, according to the Socinians, means no more than that *Christ was before Abraham in the fore-knowledge and appointment of God*. Dr. Clarke affirms “the “plain meaning to be, that he was really *with God in the “beginning, and before the world was.*” (P. 99.) And in the same way he explains, John xvii. 5. *Glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*, of the Pre-existence of Christ. (p. 112.) See a good account of this book of Dr. Clarke, and the proper use to be made of it, in *Bp. HORSLEY's Tracts*, lately published: Letter XVIIth. in reply to Priestley. § 6.

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“fore he was born of Mary his mother,”¶ and denying the personality of the Holy Spirit, reject all prayer but that which is addressed to the Father only; and with an insolence of speech, which in the ages of ancient Greece and Rome would have been deemed deserving of the severest punishment, have scrupled not to charge the worship of the Church of England with Idolatry, “exactly answering to the demon-worship of the Heathens, of Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, and Minerva, and so on,”¶ because it enjoins distinct supplications to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.\* The venerable

¶ The phrases, marked with commas, are from a printed work of an Unitarian.

\* And yet the reverend gentleman, who, in hopes of restoring the “truth of the Divine Unity, now almost lost beyond recovery,” has opened a shop in Essex-street, where he retails his new discoveries in divinity to all who are disposed to *come and buy*, has the confidence to place at the head of his list of *Enlightened Unitarian Christians*, Dr. Samuel Clarke; and besides him to reckon, as of the same persuasion with himself, such men as Sir Isaac Newton, Bp. Hoadley, and Mr. Abraham Tucker; every one of whom, and indeed Socinus himself, considered Christ as an object of worship, and made it a matter of conscience to offer prayers to Him as well as to the Father. See a sensible pamphlet, and by a LAYMAN too, entitled, *a Letter to Theophilus Lindsey, A. M. occasioned by*  
his



able person we are speaking of would have been among the first to have reprobated such sentiments and such language; and was indeed so far from thinking the worship of the Redeemer “in any manner or degree to be sinful,”¶ that he contended earnestly for the propriety of it on the authority of Scripture; and even allowed that, “by analogy, the Holy Spirit may also be desired to convey such gifts as it is his peculiar office to distribute to the Church.”\*

And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Barrow and Tillotson, of Sharp and Patrick and Burnet, of Stillingfleet and Pearson, of Bull and Hammond, of Bingham and Waterland, and a multitude of others; men of sense too great to believe a lie, of morals too pure to hold the truth in unrighteousness;† all of whom adorned the Church, of which they were ministers, by their lives, and many of them defended it by their writings. It were easy to have extended this catalogue to a greater

his late publication of an *Historical View of the State of the Unitarian Doctrine and Worship*. Lond. Payne, 1785. Where the difference between sound reasoning and sophistical tergiversation will easily be discerned by an attentive reader.

\* *Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 368, 376.

† Rom. i. 18.

length, and even to have introduced a number of divines, who now constitute the living ornaments of their order, whose names would have added still greater dignity to our list: but for fear of seeming to cast a slight on others, whom I might inadvertently omit, I refrain; and, after the great examples already produced, a more particular enumeration, and seeking farther for authorities, must be altogether superfluous.\* However, if a more direct proof be required of the high esteem in which our form of public worship is held by learned and pious persons of the present generation, the Episcopalian Church in the United States of America will furnish one, the most illustrious and decisive: the Book of Common-Prayer, which has lately been adopted by them, being in all material points the same with ours, and indeed, excepting a few alterations, not one of them impugning any article of faith, an exact copy of

\* “ Were I disposed so to do, I could draw together the  
 “ opinions of some of the wisest men that have ever adorned  
 “ our islands, who have conceived our Book of Common-  
 “ Prayer one of the finest compositions that has flowed from  
 “ the pen of man.” *Scriptural Confutation of the Arguments  
 against the One Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
 produced by Mr. Lindsey. By a LAYMAN. Lond. 1774.  
 Page 216.*

our own Ritual. Such is the simple force of truth ! and of such little effect have been the angry declamations of the enemies of our Ecclesiastical Constitution, and their ignorant censures of its doctrines and worship, both at home and abroad !

VI.

And now, Sir, having described the nature of the disease, under which you suppose the Church of England to labour, and confirmed your opinion of its infirm and sickly habit by the concurring testimony of Laymen and Divines; you proceed to tell us, that the only effectual REMEDY for this great malady is an immediate revision of the Book of Common-Prayer; and, in consequence of such revision, the amendment of those parts, which are *ill-founded* and *unscriptural*,\* or, as you elsewhere express yourself, are *defective in faith or worship*.†

In order to shew the necessity of the measure recommended, you observe, that almost one hundred and thirty years have passed since the last review was made in 1661; and that from the Reformation to the year just mentioned, a period of

\* Page 3.

† P. 35.



about one hundred and twenty-five years, the Liturgy had been altered, *you think, not less than eight times.\**

I have already had occasion to remark, that the first Liturgy of Edward VI. experienced *one* change, even during the life of that virtuous prince. Why this alteration was not followed by others, no words can better explain than those of Bp. TAYLOR, in the preface to his book before cited. “ Christendom was not only reformed,  
 “ but divided too; and it was hard to please all  
 “ the private interests and peevishness of men  
 “ that called themselves Friends. The Painter  
 “ that exposed his work to the censure of the  
 “ common passengers, resolving to mend it as  
 “ long as any man could find fault, at last had  
 “ brought the eyes to the ears, and the ears to  
 “ the neck; and for his excuse subscribed, *Hanc*  
 “ *populus fecit*: but his *Hanc ego*, that which  
 “ he made by the rules of art, and the advice of  
 “ men skilled in the same mystery, was the better  
 “ piece. The Church of England should have  
 “ pared away all the canon of the Communion, if  
 “ she had mended her piece at the interpretation of  
 “ the Zuinglians; and all her office of Baptism, if

“ she had mended by the rules of the Anabaptists;  
“ and kept up altars still, by the example of the  
“ Lutherans; and not have retained decency, by  
“ the good will of the Calvinists. Well! upon  
“ this, the wisdom of this Church and State saw  
“ it necessary to fix, where with advice she had  
“ begun, and with counsel she had *once* mended.  
“ And to have altered in things inconsiderable,  
“ upon a new design or fullen mislike, had been  
“ extreme levity, and apt to have made the men  
“ contemptible, and their authority slighted, and  
“ the thing ridiculous, especially before adver-  
“ saries, that watched all opportunities and appear-  
“ ances to have disgraced the Reformation.”

The tranquillity of Q. Elizabeth suffered frequent interruptions from the restless temper of the Puritans, who, obstinately addicted to their own opinions, were for ever at work in meditating innovations in the established religion. But it is of the utmost importance that here, Sir, you should bear in mind, not one of their attempts was aimed at the *doctrines* of the Church of England, — in which, by the acknowledgment of their leaders, they entirely agreed with us—but regarded matters of government, or rites and ceremonies only. Their chief objection, and, for  
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some time, their only one, was to our ecclesiastical habits, because they had been worn by Papists; others among them were great admirers of the discipline of Geneva, and of the institution of Lay-Elders; a third sort disliked praying by a form; and a fourth affected to hold in great abhorrence the form used by *us*, because taken from the Popish Mass-Book. It was the great policy of the Queen, during the whole of her administration, to divide her favours between the Church and the Puritans in such a manner, as to make it the interest of both to promote the ends of her government; and by this temporizing conduct she managed so, as to keep down the seeds of disaffection from rising to any dangerous height in her own time, though not to prevent their shooting up afresh, and with increased vigour, under one of her successors.

Great expectations were formed on the accession of James; who, coming from Scotland, and having established the discipline and jurisdiction of the Kirk in that kingdom, was presumed to bring along with him notions not unfriendly to the puritanical principles which prevailed here: and the famous conference at Hampton-Court, in the early part of his reign, produced some concessions in favour of the Sectaries, with which



they were, or feigned to be, satisfied. But the Royal Proclamation, soon after that conference was ended, is evidence sufficient that the King was perfectly aware what spirit they were of: for in that he declares, that “it appeared to him and  
“to his council, that mighty and vehement in-  
“formations had been supported with weak and  
“slender proofs: that there was no cause why *any*  
“change should be in that which was most im-  
“pugned, the book of Common-Prayer; and  
“that though, with the consent of the bishops and  
“other learned men, some passages therein were  
“rather *explained* than *altered*, yet the same might  
“very well have been borne among such men who  
“would have made a reasonable construction of  
“them.”

What the prevailing principles of the Separatists were able to effect in the following reign, in which the work of Reformation was carried on with such violence as to destroy the constitution in church and state, is too well known not to be remembered, though there be many amongst us who seem much disposed to forget.

I pass on to the next period, the first on which you particularly dwell, which took place soon after the Restoration in 1661. By virtue of a commission, under the great seal, to several bishops

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and other divines, the book of Common Prayer was by them revised, and certain alterations and additions were inserted in it, which, having received the sanction of Convocation, were afterwards confirmed by Parliament, and the whole was reduced to the form in which it remains at present. To this Prayer-book is prefixed a most excellent Preface; from the beginning of which you quote two short sentences, to shew that a *review*, like that you are pleading for, *is not only allowable, but consistent with the principles of our religion.*\* But had you read over the whole preface with the attention it deserves, you would have found, that any future amendments that may be made, if only of the *same sort* with those which were admitted then, would by no means satisfy either you or your friends. It was not because the Liturgy was thought *defective in faith or worship*, it was not any thing in its service that appeared to be *ill-founded and unscriptural*, to which the alterations, then introduced into it, are to be ascribed; for the writers of the preface take care to inform us, that “the main body and essentials of it had still continued the same, and did yet stand firm and unshaken:” but it was “the *forms of worship*” only, “and the *rites and ceremonies* appointed to be used therein,” which

had then been the objects of deliberation; which  
“ being things in their own nature indiffe-  
“ rent, and therefore alterable, and so acknow-  
“ ledged,” might, “ upon weighty and im-  
“ portant considerations,” be changed. Nor was  
it owing to “ any strength of argument, con-  
“ vincing” the governors of the Church at that  
time “ of the necessity of making the alterations”  
they did; for they were “ fully persuaded, and  
“ professed it to the world, that the book, as it  
“ stood before, contained nothing contrary to the  
“ word of God or to sound doctrine, or which a  
“ godly man may not with a good conscience  
“ use and submit to:” but it was with a view of  
doing what they “ conceived might most tend  
“ to the preservation of unity and peace; the  
“ procuring of reverence and exciting of piety  
“ in the public worship of God, and the cut-  
“ ting off occasion from them that sought occa-  
“ sion of cavil or quarrel against the Liturgy of  
“ the Church.” And indeed the account given  
by themselves of the changes actually made is a  
convincing proof, what the particulars were  
which in their judgment might lawfully be regu-  
lated by human authority, whilst others could on no  
pretence be mutilated or done away: all the va-



riations from the former book being of these four sorts; better directions in the calendar and rubrics for them who are to officiate; expressing words and phrases of ancient usage in terms more suitable to the language of the present time; a more perfect translation of such portions of Scripture as are inserted in the Liturgy, especially in the Epistles and Gospels; and some additional prayers and thanksgivings on special occasions, together with an office for the baptism of such as are of riper years.

The same account must be given of the next and last attempt for reforming the church under King William in 1689. The original honour of this project is due to Archbishop Sancroft, who, with a desire of conciliating the Dissenters by a scheme of *comprehension*, as it was called, directed that a review should be had of the daily service and communion-book, by a select number of divines; of whom Dr. Sharp, afterwards archbishop of York, and Dr. Patrick, afterwards bishop of Ely, were two. But it was Tillotson, then dean of Canterbury, that brought the matter to bear; through whose interest and advice with the king, a commission was issued to ten bishops and twenty divines, with instructions to prepare whatever was  
thought

thought of importance to be considered by the Convocation. By what means this design came at last to fail, a design unquestionably good in itself, and committed to men every way qualified for the undertaking, from whose learning and prudence the church had every thing to hope, and from the soundness of whose faith it had nothing to fear, those who wish to be informed, may consult the life of Abp. Tillotson by Dr. Birch; where the history of the proceedings under the ecclesiastical commission is given. It is more to my purpose to take notice of *what kind* the proposed alterations were; and from the following report it will be seen, that they bore not the smallest relation to any of those fanciful opinions, by which the modern systems of theology are so much distinguished; not one of them having the most distant connexion with any doctrinal article but the last, in which too the doctrine itself was preserved inviolate, and the exceptionable clauses were softened by an explanation. The amendments, which we are told were agreed to *unanimously*, were chiefly these: the appointment of lessons from the canonical scriptures by a new calendar, instead of lessons out of the apocryphal books; a new translation of the psalms; proper  
psalms

psalms for Sundays; new collects, answering to the Epistles and Gospels; some hymns changed for others; doubtful or improper words and phrases in different parts of the service thrown out, and others less exceptionable substituted in their room; and the Athanasian Creed being disliked by many on account of the damnatory clauses, “ they came at last to this conclusion; that, left  
 “ the wholly rejecting of it should, by unreason-  
 “ able persons, be imputed to them as Socinian-  
 “ ism, a *Rubric* should be made, setting forth  
 “ or declaring the curses denounced therein not  
 “ to be restrained to every particular article, but  
 “ intended against those who deny the substance  
 “ of the Christian religion in general,”\*

## VII.

\* See Birch's life of Abp. Tillotson, 2d ed. 8vo. p. 193—195. In the *additions* at the end of this volume there is inserted the following copy of the *Rubric* relating to this creed, as it was finally settled by the commissioners in 1689; which was communicated to Dr. Waterland from the original books, then in the possession of Dr. Gibson, bishop of London: whence too it appears, that the Creed, instead of being read thirteen times in the year, as is directed now, was intended to be read only six times, on six different festivals.

“ Upon these feasts, *Christmas-day, Easter-day, Ascension-*  
 “ *day, Whitsunday, Trinity-Sunday, and All-Saints,* shall be  
 “ said at Morning-Prayer, by the minister and people stand-  
 “ ing,



VII.

And here, Sir, an opportunity offers of attending you on your remarks on this same CREED OF ATHANASIUS, which I before engaged to consider. When this form of confession first appeared, it was accepted, Mr. Hooker informs us, “ both “ in the East and West Churches, as an inestimable price, by as many as had not given up “ the very ghost of belief;” and he himself calls it “ a most divine explication of the chiefest articles of our faith, worthy to be heard sounding in the church, whether Arianism live or “ die.”\* Very different indeed is your opinion, as we shall now see. Your first observation is, that *it appears under a feigned name*;† to which the answer is obvious, that the name is no more feigned than that given to the Creed of the Apostles is feigned; which, every one knows, is so denominated, not because it is certain, or so much as probable, it was drawn up by them, but being, instead of the Creed, commonly called the *Apostle’s Creed*, the Confession of our Christian Faith, commonly called the *Creed of St. Athanasius*: the articles of which ought to be received and believed, as being agreeable to the holy Scriptures; and the condemning clauses are to be understood as relating only to those, who obstinately deny the substance of the Christian Faith.”

\* E. P. Book V. § 42.

† P. 31,

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cause it is agreeable to what we still find in their writings. And thus the creed before us, though it be allowed that Athanasius was not himself the author of it, may well enough be called by his name, provided it contains a true representation of his doctrines. Yes! but this you deny; for, this circumstance, you say, is an *imposition*, and *it is now sufficiently proved, that, so far from being the faith of Athanasius, it is a deception of a much later date, to which the high authority of his name gave sanction; a deception, too, on which the article of faith is rested.\** Sufficiently proved, Sir! by whom? Surely not by those who have been at the pains to examine what the faith of this holy father really was. Be pleased to listen to the following testimony of a very learned person,† whose fidelity, you will own, is the less to be questioned, because he also is a LAYMAN; and then tell me whether your notion of a *deception* can be any longer maintained. “ I do not  
 “ pretend, (says this excellent author) that this  
 “ bishop of Alexandria was the composer of the  
 “ creed which is usually ascribed to him; but  
 “ thus much I can aver, from my own knowledge,

\* Page 32, 33.

† Dr. Burgh, in his *Inquiry into the belief of the Christians of the first three Centuries*. p. 384. note.

“ that

“ that every article of that creed is repeatedly to  
 “ be found in his writings: I have myself extract-  
 “ ed them.” You proceed to assure us, that *this*  
*creed is now acknowledged by all to have been*  
*written by Vigilus Tapsensis.\** By Vigilus of  
*Tapsus*, or *bishop of Tapsus*, I should have said;  
 lest a common reader should think Vigilus to have  
 been the man’s christian name, and Tapsensis his  
 surname. Now here, Sir, you speak with more  
 confidence than you are warranted to use from au-  
 thentic history. There were two persons who  
 went under this appellation; one, who was bishop  
 of Trent in the 4th century, *Vigilius Tridentinus*;  
 and another, who lived about seventy years after, and  
 was bishop of Tapsus in Africa, *Vigilius Tapsensis*:  
 the latter of these signalized himself by writing a-  
 gainst the Arians under the name of Athanasius;  
 whence P. Quesnel was induced to attribute the  
 Athanasian Creed also to him. The conjecture is  
 plausible, and has been adopted by others: but had  
 you condescended to have looked into the *critical*  
*history* of this creed by Dr. Waterland, you would  
 have found another person, a bishop also, whom  
 he supposes, and on probable grounds, to have  
 been the author.

\* Page 31.



The *name* and the *writer* of the creed being dispatched, we come next to the Creed itself. And here our first care should be to distinguish between the *doctrines* contained in this symbol, and the *clauses* by which our assent to those doctrines is enforced. The doctrines are precisely the same with those delivered in various other places of our service-book; in the beginning of the litany, in the endings of several collects, in the Nicene creed, and in the forms of baptism; only set forth with greater particularity, by way of opposition to the erroneous opinions which then prevailed in the church. The clauses which condemn the impugnors of these doctrines, and are not properly parts of the creed, declare nothing more than the opinion of the composer, desirous of impressing on his readers the danger of rejecting articles which he esteemed essential to the integrity of the Christian faith. And viewed in this light, they admit of a natural and easy interpretation: nor, as the ablest commentators have shewn, is there any more uncharitableness in the writer of this creed, when he affirms, in general terms, that all who do not hold the Catholic faith shall perish everlastingly, than there was in our Saviour, when he declared, in terms as general, *He*  
*that*

that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned:\* all propositions of this sort being universally to be taken with equitable exceptions and abatements.† However for myself I am free to say, (and I am happy to find that Abp. Secker has said the same thing before me,‡) that it is still devoutly to be wished, these clauses had never made parts of the original creed; or had been rejected when the creed was first taken into our Liturgy; or at least that some restriction, as to the sense in which they are to be understood, like to that which was proposed by the ecclesiastical commissioners of William III. had been authoritatively declared in a particular Rubric for that purpose.

But such expedients as these you, Sir, seem not inclined to admit; and the better to justify your own dislike of the creed in question, you lay be-

\* Mark xvi. 16.

† “ Put case, the heresy there (i. e. in Athanasius’ Creed) “ condemned be damnable, as it is damnable enough; yet “ a man may maintain an opinion that is in itself damnable, and yet he, not knowing it to be so, and being invincibly led into it, may go to heaven: his opinion shall burn, and himself be saved.” *Liberty of Propheying*. Sect. II. No 6.

‡ Sermons, Vol. VI. Serm. IX.

fore your readers *the thoughts of three of our ablest divines on this subject.*\* The first is the famous CHILLINGWORTH, already spoken of;† concerning whom what you deliver is undoubtedly the truth, but, what I fear you did not enough advert to, or perhaps were ignorant of, it is not the *whole* truth. One principal reason, why this excellent person scrupled for some time to assent to the articles of our church, was the damning sentences in Athanasius' Creed; which sentences he conceived to be not only "false," but "also in a high degree "presumptuous and schismatical. And therefore," says he, "I can neither subscribe that "these things are *agreeable to the word of God*, "seeing I believe they are certainly repugnant "to it; nor that the whole Common-Prayer is "lawful to be used, seeing I believe this part of it "is certainly unlawful; nor promise that *I myself will use it*, seeing I never intend either to "read it, or to say *Amen* to it."‡ Such was the opinion of Chillingworth in the year 1635; notwithstanding which, three years afterwards, in 1638, it is most certain these difficulties were all

\* Page 31.

† Page 32.

‡ Life of Chillingworth, p. vi.



surmounted; and he subscribed to the XXXIX Articles, and to the use of the Liturgy, and of course to the use of this very creed. It had been before made matter of reproach to this admirable man, on his return to Protestantism, that he forsook the religion of the Church of Rome, "because it conduced not to his temporal ends." To this charge he answers thus: "Of this great fault my conscience acquits me; and God, who knows the hearts of all men, knows that I am innocent: neither doubt I but all they who know me, and among them many persons of place and quality, will say they have reason in this matter to be my compurgators."\* The same answer precisely he would have given, had an imputation of the like kind been repeated, after he had declared his consent to the Athanasian Creed. Where a man is known to have entertained two opinions, directly repugnant to each other, on an important article of faith; it is hardly consistent with justice to acquaint us with the former of these opinions only, without saying a word of that in which he settled: and the actual subscription of Chillingworth, added to his acknowledged veracity and sincerity in every other instance, is abun-

\* Preface to the author of *Charity maintained*, §. 29.

dant evidence that his conformity in the present case was founded on motives of conscience, and that he was indeed persuaded his *last* judgement was more to be relied on than his *first*.

You cite a passage from JEREMY TAYLOR's *Liberty of Prophefying*,\* in which the "uncharitableness put into the creed" is condemned. But here too it ought in all fairness to have been added, that in the same discourse, and in the same section of the discourse, this *orthodox bishop* was careful to profess, that "for the articles themselves, he was most heartily persuaded of the truth of them;" as indeed no one can doubt, who is at all conversant in his writings. It seems also to me, that you do not perfectly understand the very sentence you have cited. The good bishop writes thus: "the censures, in the preface and end, are arguments of his [the author's] zeal and strength of his persuasion; but they are extrinsical and accidental to the *articles*, and might as well have been spared. And indeed to me it seems very hard to put uncharitableness into the *creed*, and so to make it [uncharitableness] become an article of *faith*; though perhaps *this very thing* [i. e. the uncharitableness

† Sect. II. N° 36.

" before

“before mentioned] was *no faith* of Athanasius.”

Here your quotation ends; and by the phrase, *this very thing*, understanding the bishop to mean the *creed*, you go on to say, that *so far from being the faith of Athanasius, it is now proved to be a deception of a later date,\* &c.* But the sentence is not yet completed, and concludes thus:—

“who, if we may believe Aquinas, made this ma-

“nifestation of his faith, *non per modum Symboli, sed*

“*per modum Doctrinæ*; that is, if I understood him

“right, not to impose it upon *others*, but with

“confidence to declare *his own belief*; and that it

“was prescribed to others as a *creed*, was the act

“of the bishops of Rome.” In this passage the

bishop does not deny that the *creed* is the

work of him whose name it bears, though after-

wards he says, that “possibly it was none of his;”

but granting, for argument’s sake, that he was

the author, he acceded to the opinion of Aquinas,

that Athanasius drew it up for his own private

instruction, and not with a design of obtruding

it on others as a general symbol.

Your third quotation from the famous letter of Tillotson to Burnet, who had sent to the Archbishop, in manuscript, his *exposition of the XXXIX articles*;

\* Page 32.



in which letter Tillotson confesses the account Burnet had given of Athanasius' Creed "to be to him no-wise satisfactory, and wishes we were well rid of it;"\* has been repeated so often by such writers as yourself, that one is almost sick at hearing it: all therefore I shall say on the matter is, that how much soever this great prelate might disapprove the severe clauses in the creed, he cannot be supposed to dislike the doctrine which those clauses were meant to guard; as is evident from many passages in his Sermons, and particularly from those *on the Divinity and Incarnation of Christ*; as any one will perceive, who gives them, what they well deserve, a serious perusal.

## VIII.

But the Athanasian Creed is not, in your account, the only obnoxious part in our Liturgy; and correcting or expunging this would go but a little way towards completing your plan of a revival, were other places, where the same doctrines are inculcated, permitted to escape the desperate hook of your criticism. Your chief objection to this creed, you have fairly told us, does not arise so much from its *appearing under*

a feigned name, as from its holding forth DOCTRINES derogatory to the honour of God.\* You speak with applause of the endeavours of Dr. Clarke, to clear our FAITH and worship from all DOCTRINES and declarations not founded on Scripture † And to leave us in no doubt what the doctrines are to which you allude, in another place, where you mention the text, in 1 John v. 7, 8. concerning the Three which bear record in heaven, you inform us, that it hath been clearly proved to be an interpolation; ‡ has been long given up by those who have been most esteemed for their learning; and, while it is suffered to remain in our bibles, is liable to lead the people into the greatest mistakes, unless the Clergy, whose duty it is, shall warn their congregations, from the pulpit, against a reliance on such suspected texts. || I do not think it ought to be required from Laymen, that they should busy themselves in examining all the idle controversies which have sometimes been agitated among Divines; but when one of this profession takes upon him to decide dogmatically on the truth of certain doctrines, and on the genuineness of certain texts, of holy Scripture, we have a right to expect from such a one, that he should be so

\* Page 31. † P. 30. ‡ P. 48. || P. 47, 48, 49.

far master of his subject, as to have gained a general acquaintance with the principal arguments, and the principal writers too, that have appeared on both sides the disputed questions. This is not the place to enter into a laboured defence of the peculiar tenets, which form the basis of our public worship; the matter has been long done to our hands by many of our ablest writers, of the Laity as well as Clergy, in the last and present century. From consulting their works abundant satisfaction may be had by those, who desire to know *the reasons* of a Christian's *hope* ;\* and all the silly objections, begot by ignorance and nursed by self-conceit, which have been lately dressed up anew, and proposed with as much confidence as if they were now first heard of, will be found to have received a full and final demolition. For a specimen of a rational and solid answer to the most plausible arguments that have been urged against the belief of the Trinity, I beg leave to refer you to the 12th and 15th letters of Bp. HORSLEY, in reply to Dr. Priestley: and as to the text of 1 John v. 7. 8. suffer me to introduce to your acquaintance another celebrated work, which seems hitherto to have entirely escaped your notice; the

\* 1 Pet. iii. 15.



letters of Mr. TRAVIS to Mr. Gibbon ; where the authenticity of this important passage of Scripture is vindicated in a superior way, so as to leave no room for future doubt or cavil.

IX.

To all that has been said I am aware of one general reply, which is of the following sort : “ That allowing the account of former revivals of the Book of Common-Prayer to be as hath been represented, and that nothing more was done, or meant to be done, by them, besides the abolishing or changing of some of the rites and ceremonies, before prescribed in it ; yet now the case is very different, and we of the present generation are as much dissatisfied with the *doctrines* of the establishment as those of the past were disgusted with its *forms*. Of this alteration of the public judgment, a late attempt to abolish subscriptions to articles of faith is an incontestible proof ; and the same unwillingness to yield an implicit assent to the maxims of our forefathers, in matters of religion, is visible at this day. It can never be supposed, that *the bishops and others, concerned in the review of 1661*, could be so weak as to think, that *their publication was to become*

*the fixt standard for the faith and worship of future generations; or that their successors would consider themselves irrevocably tied to their decrees, in spite of every possible demonstration of error.\**

In every science, and in the science of religion among the rest, there is a natural progress to perfection. Every succeeding age is of course wiser than that which went before it. To the generous struggles of our ancestors, who opposed the tyranny and usurpation of the Church of Rome, we are indebted for the blessings of the Reformation: What remained for us to do was to profit by their labours; and, gradually advancing from one discovery to another, to become at length as much superior to them in all the branches of theological knowledge, as they excelled the barbarism and superstition, which prevailed in the times preceding. It was the laudable occupation of divines, who lived soon after the rejection of the papal yoke, to remove whatever was offensive in the externals of religion; to us hath been reserved the more important care of examining its internal constitution and doctrines: and from the specimens already produced by certain ingenious and philosophical men there is ground to expect,

\* Page 21, 22.

that,

that, with proper encouragement, Revelation will soon be purged from every thing foreign and adventitious, and reduced at last to a Rational System, founded on the unerring principles of well-interpreted Scripture and truth."

As this, Sir, is the palmary argument, which you and others have always at hand, to justify your clamours for an amendment of our Liturgy and Articles, it may be of use to consider it with some attention.

And in the first place I wish it might be remembered, that the parallel, so often drawn between the fates and fortunes of sacred and profane literature, will by no means generally hold. That human sciences of every kind are naturally progressive, that the beginnings in them all are rude and imperfect, and that it is not till after much diligence and perseverance, and a variety of unsuccessful attempts, that they arrive at any thing like stability and completion, every one will allow. But that the same progression obtains with regard to the doctrines which constitute the science of theology, no sober believer will hastily affirm. When Christianity was introduced into the world, it had no previous states of infancy and weakness to go through, before its nature and genius could be perfectly known; but appeared at once in full  
maturity



maturity and vigour. As it descended immediately from *the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning*;\* it was, like its founder, complete in all its parts; not wanting, nor indeed capable of receiving, any aid from the meretricious ornaments of secular learning, or the discoveries of a future age; but containing an entire system in itself, to which nothing can be added, from which nothing can be detracted. The rich profusion of treasures, with which it abounds, is deposited in one volume, open to the inspection of all men; to which, as to a perennial fountain, all are invited to *come, and take of the water of life freely, without money and without price*.† It was the great infelicity of the monkish ages, and one principal cause of the darkness and ignorance which overwhelmed them, that this source of celestial truth was industriously concealed from vulgar eyes, and the little of knowledge that was left was buried under a load of useless ceremonies and traditions. The great business of the Reformers was to remove the rubbish of human ordinances with which the gospel was incruited, to republish the glad tidings of salvation in a language generally understood, and

\* James i. 17.

† If. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 1, 17.

to fix the rule of faith, where only it is to be found, in Scripture. When once this was effected, and religion, now cleared of every thing extrinsic, was suffered to shine in its native lustre and simplicity, the work of these venerable men was finished: unless we imagine that a revelation of the divine will, once sufficiently promulged, must every now and then stand in need of a revival by human art; or with Hudibras conceive no reformation can be of use, but that

- “ Which always must be carried on,
- “ And still be doing, never done :
- “ As if religion were intended
- “ For nothing else but to be mended.”

But the absurdity of a progressive religion is not only apparent from what has been now remarked of the essential difference between profane and sacred learning; the same conviction will arise from considering the design of Revelation itself. As the religion of Christ was intended for a benefit to the whole race of mankind by its all-merciful Author, in whose eyes the soul of the meanest rustic is equally precious with that of the profoundest

foundest philosopher; the truths which it delivers must of course be so accommodated to our apprehensions as to be obvious to the most ordinary person, who studies them with an honest mind. Let us then suppose a man of common understanding, unfettered with prejudices, seriously to sit down and consult his Bible, with a view of learning from thence what are the chief and leading articles which a Christian is bound to know and believe; and let us consider the conclusions he will be likely to form after such a perusal. Must he not immediately perceive, that the fundamental principle of all religion is this, *that there is One God, and there is none other but He?*\* and yet, notwithstanding this great truth, that Three Persons are distinctly spoken of, to whom separate offices are ascribed in conducting the great work of man's salvation, and such attributes and properties are said to belong to each as can be possessed by no Creature, or by any Being less than God? Whence it follows, that the Divine Unity, according to the idea of it delivered in the New Testament, be its metaphysical nature what it may, is certainly such as does not exclude a Plurality of Persons, although the *manner*, in which

\* Mark xii. 32.



these Persons are so united as to be One God, be still unknown. Can he help discerning also, that the irreverfible fentence of mortality, which experience no lefs than Scripture fhews to have *passed upon all men*, was owing to the transgression of our first parent, *by whom sin entered into the world, and death by sin*?† that his posterity, far from being able to prevent the sad effects of the fall of their common progenitor, have added to the load of original guilt by many offences of their own? that were God to *enter into judgment* with the most perfect of the sons of men, *no flesh* could hope to be *justified in his sight*?‡ that when we *have done* our best, we have but *done our duty*?|| and that *eternal life* with happiness is too rich a purchase to be procured by any merit or obedience of ours, but *is the gift of God through Jesus Christ*;§ *whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation*;¶ and *in whom we have redemption through his blood, even forgiveness of sins*?\* Now these and other truths of the like nature are the very doctrines of the first reformers, of Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer,

† Rom. v. 12.

‡ Ps. cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 20.

|| Luke xvii. 10.

§ Rom. vi. 20.

¶ Rom. iii. 25.

\* Coloss. i. 14.

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\* Coloss. i. 14.



and the rest, who flourished in the 16th century : they are the same doctrines also, which are every where taught in the Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, of the Church of England ; and which must of necessity be taught by every Church on earth, which is *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets* ;\* since they occur in almost every page of the New Testament, and cannot be overlooked by the most vulgar reader, whose mind is not already occupied with prejudices of its own.

I am far from contending, there are not many things in the sacred books, and particularly in the doctrines now mentioned, which we cannot explain ; which elude our most anxious inquiries, and refuse to be brought under the test of our severest reason : just as there are many things in natural religion, relating to the creation of the world, the moral government of God, the origin of evil, and the like, concerning which it is easy for the weakest man to ask questions, which the wisest may find it difficult to answer. Perhaps, a more distinct information of what is now concealed is unattainable in our present state ; or it might be hurtful to us in a variety of ways, of

\* Ephes. ii. 20.

which

which we have no conception. On subjects of this mysterious nature, it is not expected that we comprehend, but that we believe: where we cannot unriddle, we are to learn to trust; where our faculties are too weak to penetrate, we are to check our curiosity and adore. The doctrines of Christianity being all contained in one book, the Bible; and it being once allowed, that this was written by men divinely secured from error; the consequence undeniably follows, that from the authority of the above book there lies no appeal; and whatever is clearly recorded here must be received as infallibly true, however inexplicable it may appear to our understandings. Excellent to this purpose are the words of the modest and learned Chillingworth; which I would recommend to be worn as a phylactery by every young student in theology, whose brain may be in danger of intoxication by shallow draughts from the sacred spring: "Propose  
" me any thing out of this book, and require whe-  
" ther I believe it or no; and, seem it never so in-  
" comprehensible to human reason, I will subscribe  
" it with hand and heart; as knowing no demon-  
" stration can be stronger than this, God hath  
" said so, Therefore it is true."\*

\* R. P. Ch. vi. §. 56.

Before I part with the present argument it may be proper to observe, that no inference can fairly be drawn from any thing that has been said, in disparagement of Human Learning; whose aid in the service of religion, whether in proving the authenticity, illustrating the design, or elucidating the difficulties, of the sacred writings; or in setting forth the advantages and necessity of revelation itself, ascertaining its evidence, and vindicating its doctrines; none but the rankest enthusiast will deny: and so long as it is confined within these limits, it is most usefully and honourably employed. But with the doctrines themselves, as they are delivered in Scripture, Human Learning, I maintain, has no concern: these are proposed to us as objects of faith, not of knowledge; whatever obscurities were found in them by such men as Ridley, Jewell, Hooker, &c. they still continue to this day; and whenever attempts have been made to bring them down to the level of our comprehension, under pretence of forming what some are pleased to call a *rational* system of religion, the consequence has invariably been, the rejecting of almost every article peculiar to revelation,



lation, and leaving in its stead a cold and cheerless set of meagre opinions, yielding no comfort to the mind of man either in life or in death. Instances of the abuses alluded to will offer themselves in plenty to any one at all acquainted with the writings of modern sectaries; and I wish I could not add, some instances may also be found in the writings of others, who have been members, and even ministers, of the Church of England. Thus by pushing our inquiries beyond the bounds prescribed by God and nature, every absurdity may be produced, and, in time, believed.

In Pride, in REASONING PRIDE, our error lies;  
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.

In the very science, which boasts of being built on strict demonstration, a proposition has sometimes been proved to be mathematically true, which is contrary to the plainest maxims of common sense: as I remember once to have happened to a celebrated Analyst, who by the help of a long algebraical process, and after much pains in unravelling the intrigues of a tedious and intricate equation, at last discovered this notable Theorem, worthy to be engraven on his tomb, like the  
sphere

sphere and cylinder on that of Archimedes; *nothing divided by nothing is equal to four.*

## X.

But your cares for the public, Sir, are not confined to the improvement of our faith and worship, as these are regulated by the Liturgy; from another of your Hints we learn, you are a strenuous supporter of the project for a NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE; which *the people having a right to read in their own language, it is really criminal, you tell us, to give it otherwise than under as pure and perfect a version as the labours of the learned can make it.\** This, I know, is a favourite topic with some, whom I believe to be much in earnest in promoting the interests of true religion. You seem, Sir, to imagine, that the researches of the late Dr. Kennicott might greatly help to facilitate such a scheme.\* I would not be wanting in respect for his veracity and diligence; but let me have leave to say, it has not *yet* been seen that religion or learning have been *much* the gainers by his collations; and be the benefits to be expected from them greater or less, they might all as successfully be applied to a re-

*visal* of our present translation, which would include of course the *correction* of those passages where the sense of the original text has been evidently mistaken, as to a version entirely new. And this seems to have been the whole wish of Bishop Lowth, if I can at all understand his words, either in his Visitation-Sermon, or in the Preliminary Dissertation to his Isaiah: in both which places he recommends “an accurate *re-* “*visal* of our vulgar translation;” and in the latter, he not only allows “the *style* of that translation to be *excellent in itself*, and to have taken possession of our ear and of our taste;” and again, that, “as to *style* and *language*, it admits “but of little improvement;” but also expressly declares, that “a *revision*, or *correction*, of that “translation may perhaps be MORE ADVISABLE “than to attempt an entirely new one.” So that the author of a *Letter to the Bishop of Norwich*, the malignity of which can be exceeded by nothing but the blasphemy which lies skulking in a note towards the end of it, might have spared his pains, and not have troubled the world, or exposed himself, by his ill-natured reflections on a very exemplary prelate, whose learning and piety will be revered, when the pertness and petulance of such writers



writers as himself shall have long been lost and forgotten.

But of all the attempts to recommend an improved translation of the Bible, that of the egregious Dr. Symonds, in his "Critical Observations on our present Version of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles," is the most extraordinary. *Admirable* observations\* you call them, Sir; and so, in truth, they are, if by that word you mean something that excites one's wonder and astonishment, without implying the smallest degree of approbation; for a more elaborate and pompous nothing, a meaner collection of puerile remarks and piddling criticisms, introduced with a parade and consequence that would hardly have been decent after the most important discoveries in literature, was never obtruded on the public than in this performance. Some how or other the Modern History-Professor had got it into his head, that "our translators had not a thorough knowledge of grammar and syntax;" and resolved to shew the superiority of his own attainments in this respect, he is perpetually descanting on the differences between definite and indefinite articles, between relatives and their antecedents,

\* Page 50.

verbs neuter and verbs active, adverbative and illative particles, expletives and simple conjunctions, and I know not how many other terms besides, that occur in a grammatical dictionary. Then, to prove at once his diligence and his skill in the languages, after he has given us his own rendering of a particular passage, in which, without the smallest necessity, he varies from the present reading, and often to the injury both of the sense and spirit of his original, he is careful to tell us how the place is turned in the French, and Italian, and Spanish, Bibles; and we are sure to hear the changes rung on the names of Wicliff, and Tyndall, and Coverdale, and a number of others, by whom the Scriptures were translated into English in former times. Many of the corrections with which his work abounds may fairly be attributed to his ignorance of the idioms of his native tongue, which were in common use in the age when the present version was made: with equal propriety he might find fault with Chaucer, Spencer, or any other of our old authors, because they do not conform themselves to the mode of writing peculiar to modern times. Of Dr. Priestley, and another man who answers to the name of Wakefield, he speaks with applause; but Bishop Pearce he scruples not to call “*eminently trifling*,” and he affects a tenderness in

L

“ not

“not insulting over the mistakes” of the famous Beza. In short, so many are the evil consequences which he apprehends from the present corrupt state of our English Bible, that he “almost questions whether it would not be safer to take it out of the hands of the common people than expose them to the danger of drawing false conclusions from erroneous translations.” This last remark is indeed a curiosity, which one would not have expected from a Professor in a *Protestant* university: No *Papist* ever made a better argument for locking up the Scriptures from vulgar use. On the whole, a more useless and uninteresting work, or one that less pays for the trouble of a perusal, I never laboured through than that before us. If you, Sir, know any thing more of this Cambridge Professor than you find in his book, you cannot do him a greater service than advise him never to think of “enlarging his plan, and giving us his remarks on the Epistles;” for we have had quite enough already from his *admirable observations* on the Gospels and Acts.

# XI.

The remaining part of your pamphlet is employed in pressing the immediate execution of the proposal for an amended Liturgy, without the delay of *a day*, or even *an hour*; on account of certain



certain *peculiar circumstances* in the *present situation* of this country, which, it seems, are *singularly adapted for producing this blessing to the community*.\*

One of these peculiar circumstances is taken from *the sense of the late signal interposition of divine providence*, in the re-establishment of the health of our beloved SOVEREIGN after a dangerous illness.† I most cordially join with you, Sir, in the pious wish, that this most seasonable and undeserved favour, bestowed upon us by the Giver of all good, may *sink deep into the hearts of all his majesty's subjects*; and that a moment, *so suited to promote a religious disposition, may be seized, to make the best return we are able for such an inestimable mercy*.‡ But that this religious disposition would be properly manifested, or this best return made, by *bringing the worship of the national church to a degree of purity and perfection*§ which would satisfy you, Sir, and those who think with you, I positively deny. Though we allow, as I have said already, a few things may be found in our Ritual, which, with advantage to the symmetry and beauty of the whole, might perhaps be altered or removed; still we are firmly persuaded, (and, notwithstanding all you pretend, much the greater part

\* Page 36, 37.

† Page 38.

‡ P. 39.

both of the Laity and Clergy, we have reason to think, are firmly persuaded also,) that the Church of England, in its present form, is beyond all comparison the soundest and purest of any in the Christian world.\* Under the influence of this opinion, *prejudice* you will call it, we are prompted by a sense of gratitude to our great Benefactor to preserve its worship in the same primitive state in which it was left by those venerable and learned men, who cleansed it from the errors of Popery at the end of the 16th century, rather than through an eagerness of correcting parts to risque the soundness and safety of the whole. You, Sir, express your hope, that *no bigoted tongue may ever succeed to persuade his Majesty, that the hasty settlement in 1661 can be maintained in these days, without giving up the credit and sound principles, on which the Church of England ought to stand and actually is founded:*† and we, Sir, in our turn,

\* So at least the learned Isaac Casaubon thought it, who thus expresses himself in a letter to Salmasius: “*Si me conjectura non fallit, totius Reformationis pars integerrima est in Anglia, ubi cum studio veritatis viget studium antiquitatis.*” So the son of the famous Grotius calls it, in the dedication of his father’s works to King Charles II. in the year 1678, “*pars Christiani orbis, si non major, sanior certe.*” And other testimonies of foreign Protestants to the same purpose it were easy to produce.

† Page 39.

declare

declare our confidence, that no Arian, or Socinian, or Unitarian, tongue, will ever succeed to persuade the same amiable Monarch, (of whose regard for religion in general, and particularly for that established in this kingdom, we have had abundant proof,) that the system of faith and worship, which our adversaries have long been labouring to erect, can be maintained, without giving up the credit and sound principles, on which not only the Church of England but the Church of Christ must stand, in order to be entitled to the promise, that *the gates of hell shall never prevail against it.*\*

XII.

Another circumstance in our situation, which would greatly tend, in your opinion, to promote the object you have in view, is the STATE OF PARTIES, *which now divide the country; there being no jealousy between the leaders more strong than the ambition of appearing to approach, nearer than his rival, to the principles of the REVOLUTION.*†

I revere the principles of the Revolution, and am as sensible to the blessings of it, as much as you, Sir, or any man, let him be of what party he will; though I do not attend the meeting-house at the Old Jewry to hear Dr. Kippis or Dr. Price,

\* Matt. xvi. 18.

P. 37.

nor,



nor, with Earl Stanhope, aspire to the honour of the chair at the anniversary dinner of the society lately instituted for commemorating that event. Let but these principles be adhered to in their full force, and our monarchy and aristocracy, as well as hierarchy, are safe; which I cannot think any of them would long be under the management of a set of men, by whom the word *Revolution* has been employed as a symbol of faction, or rather as a cloak to cover republican notions of their own, which the constitution of this kingdom knows not, and I hope will never know. That these principles *lead to an extensive toleration, to religious as well as civil liberty,\** I readily allow; at the same time I assert, that by an act of the legislature in 1772, this religious liberty has been effectually secured from invasion, and the toleration, granted to Dissenters by law, has been made complete. You say, that the same principles will never suffer *our faith and worship to be bound down by the fallible decisions of men;†* but I am sure you will not say, that either the principles of the Revolution, or any other set of principles, ought to prevail against the infallible decisions of Scripture: now I maintain, as stoutly

\* Page 37.

† P. 38.

as Chillingworth himself, that “the Bible is the  
“ religion of Protestants,” and that the faith of  
the Church of England, like that of the first  
Christians, doth *not stand in the words of man’s  
wisdom, but in the power and on the word of God.*\*  
Whether your account of the *state of parties* be  
correct or not, I am unable to determine: that  
an attachment of this sort is strangely apt to in-  
fluence our judgments, both of measures and of  
men, is too plain to be denied: and it seems as  
little to be questioned, that persons may agree in  
opinion on political subjects, yet differ widely  
from each other on matters of a religious nature;  
and, on the other hand, may be very adverse in  
politics, yet hold the same notions in things  
which concern religion. Of the latter of these  
cases I have an eminent instance now before me:  
two persons of the first consideration in this coun-  
try, but of opposite sentiments in government, I  
mean the present minister of his majesty, and the  
late minister in the American war, one the Repre-  
sentative in Parliament of the University of Cam-  
bridge, the other the Chancellor of the Univer-  
sity of Oxford, joining, with the greatest unani-  
mity, in supporting the ecclesiastical establish-  
ment, when attacked in the House of Commons

\* 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

by the Dissenters; and, in their arguments on that memorable occasion, defending it on such solid principles both of reason and law, as, it is hoped, will long be had in grateful remembrance by the true friends of our constitution in Church and State.

## XIII.

You go on to hint that, *according to the notions of certain flimsy politicians, if dangerous corruptions be left to them, it will never be thought the proper time to examine and correct them*;\* and that *it may be the subject for a separate essay, to point out the mistaken policy of any MINISTER, who trusts that clergymen, preferred by the crown, but whose notions are inimical to a comprehension, will be able, however learned, to support ecclesiastical affairs against all enquiry and alteration whatever*.† Here again, Sir, I confess myself at a loss to know, upon what grounds you suspect that it is, or ever was, the wish either of his majesty's Minister or of any of the Clergy, whether partakers of the royal patronage or not, that ecclesiastical affairs should be screened from all *enquiry*. Our discipline and government, our liturgy and articles, our places and times of worship, are exposed, without reserve, to the examination of all men: we have no distinction of doctrines into exoteric and esote-

\* Page 45, 46.

† P. 53, 54.



ric; no mysteries, into which a few only are initiated, whilst the rest of mankind are detained in ignorance and error; nor do we acknowledge any maxim, like that avowed and defended by the founders of Heathenism, that it is lawful to deceive or lie for the public good. The enemies of our religious polity have wanted neither opportunity nor inclination to discredit its pretensions, if reasoning, such as theirs, could have done it, long ago; their learning and their wit have been equally tried against it, and with equal insuccess; and the conviction of its utility, we trust, is more firmly rooted than ever in the hearts of the wise and good. As to *alterations*, when they are important and necessary, when they are calculated to remove corruptions which affect the essence of the Christian faith, as was the case when the great separation was made from the Church of Rome; prove, Sir, that those you contend for are of this nature, and we are ready to adopt them, be the danger what it may: even such as are recommended as convenient only we would not willingly refuse, were we well assured that more good than harm would be the consequence of receiving them: but when others have been proposed,

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posed, which not only contradict the doctrines already established, but in our apprehension are repugnant to the plain and unsophisticated sense of Scripture; such as, if once allowed, would occasion a total change in all the offices of our public service, and indeed amount to an entire subversion of the national belief; these, so far from approving, we conceive ourselves bound to reject with something more than indifference, as making no part of divine revelation rightly understood, and tending to destroy *the faith which was once delivered to the saints*.\*

Reflect, Sir, but for a moment, what it was that prevented the moderate plan for amending the Liturgy, in 1689, from being brought to a conclusion; what heats and jealousies attended it whilst it was under agitation; together with the mischiefs which in all likelihood must have followed, had it been carried into execution; inso-much that Bishop Burnet, one of the warmest for a comprehension when the scheme was depending, was compelled to own, that, had the intended corrections passed the Convocation, the Jacobites, who opposed every change in the Church, would have made such advantage of this

\* Jude v. 3.

circumstance,

circumstance, as might have endangered the Revolution and restored the abdicated monarch; and therefore that it was "a happy direction of the providence of God" that it failed: and then consider, whether less warmth and animosity would be excited by such a reform, as would probably be offered to Parliament now, than were raised in Convocation by one infinitely less exceptionable an hundred years ago. I make no doubt there are persons who, like yourself, would assist in supporting any scheme of this sort that appeared practicable, from a sincere desire of promoting the public good: but how many or how few there would be of this description, or what they would be able to agree on at last, considering the great variety of discordant projects, relating both to doctrine and to discipline, with which their deliberations would be embarrassed, and each projector zealous for his own, is impossible to foretel. A considerable number in both houses of the legislature, whether from an unwillingness to meddle with a subject which they might not perfectly understand, or from pusillanimity, or from indolence, it is to be presumed, would not attend; whilst others, it is to be feared, who had no claim to esteem from a virtuous character themselves, would join in any



measure, however dangerous or desperate, that helped to depress religion and the clergy. Now, Sir, what servant of the crown, who at all consulted either his own or the public quiet, would rashly engage in a plan, which would almost certainly be accompanied with much present mischief, and which is so little likely to be productive of future good? They, who have experienced the anxieties of an exalted station, have generally found employment enough in combating the difficulties which time and chance, in the shifting vicissitudes of human things, have of course thrown in their way, without the trouble of going out in search of adventures. The person who at present fills the high department of first Minister to the King, as respectable for his private as for his public virtues, nor more to be admired for the lustre of his extraordinary abilities than to be loved for the purity of his morals, though he does not affect to court danger, has never betrayed a willingness to decline it; and in two attempts made by Dissenters to procure the abolition of those salutary laws, which the wisest statesmen as well as ablest writers of the last and present age have considered as the surest bulwarks of the national religion, has stood the foremost to oppose them. It is not from the  
representations

representations of such writers as Dr. Priestley and Dr. Price, that his merits on this important question are to be estimated, but from the opinions of wise and candid and dispassionate men; and particularly from the judgments of the learned in our Two Universities, who cannot be considered as unconcerned spectators of what may eventually affect their dearest interests, who naturally seek for protection from all who have been educated among them, and indeed have a *right* to expect it from those, in whom they have so far placed their confidence, as to confer on them the highest offices of trust and dignity in their own disposal. Next to God and the King, we look up to Him with well-grounded affiance, that in every attack on the Church of England, whether by Dissenters or Churchmen, by professed enemies or pretended friends, his talents will still be successfully exerted in our behalf, and that through his firmness and support, in concurrence with other members of the legislature, we shall be conducted through all the perils which may surround us with safety and honour.

XIV.

But it seems it is not so much from the interference of the Minister, that the relief you are soliciting

liciting is to come, as from THE RIGHT REVEREND BENCH :\* from them a plan of the sort you are recommending should properly *originate*: from them *the nation have a right to demand some activity, some proofs of a sincere disposition of reconciling, as far as may be, all good men to the communion of the established church*;† nor would any thing more effectually *silence every unfair insinuation, now too frequently dropped, as if their Lordships were too much attached to their temporal and too little attentive to their spiritual concerns,* than to have it *known that the Bishops have applied to the King, that a revisal, under the royal authority, might be committed to them and others to prepare.*‡ It is no uncommon art with persons of a certain disposition to talk of amending the Liturgy and Articles, as one of the easiest things in the world for the bishops to effect whenever they please; though they cannot want to be told, that were their Lordships ever so persuaded of the necessity of amendments, and ever so desirous of promoting them, nothing can be done, or even with safety attempted, without the concurrence of the civil powers to give strength and stability to their

\* Page 42.

† Page 44.

‡ Page 45.

proceedings.



proceedings. This way of talking and writing may serve very well as an argument *ad invidiam*, and with a design of holding out *the superior Clergy*||, as obstinately bent to oppose all alterations whatever; but will have no weight with sober and thinking persons, who are aware what danger might arise from hasty proposals for reforming the Church, when multitudes are on the watch for such an opportunity to destroy it; or who recollect the memorable saying of a great character, deeply concerned in the troubles of the last century, and himself a sufferer in them, "I shall, for my part, never deny but that the Liturgy of the Church of England may be made better; but I am sure withal it may easily be made worse."\* You are candid enough to acknowledge,

|| Page 57.

\* The judgment of the sage and cautious Archbishop Secker on this subject, in his Latin oration, prepared for the Convocation, in 1761, is well worthy to be attended to. *ARTICULOS FIDEI recoquendos, et incudi reddendos, non pauci contendunt. Nec diffitemur potuisse quædam aptius enunciari, et adversus tam argutias quàm hallucinationes melius muniri. Sed præclare, ut illis temporibus, instructa et composita sunt omnia; egentque hodie tantum explicatione commodâ; non vâfram et veteratoriam intelligo, sed*  
artie

knowledge, that *the learning, and piety, and abilities, of the present set of bishops are equal to those of any who have filled their Lordships bench*;† nor will it be denied, our enemies themselves being judges, that, besides possessing the virtues peculiar to their profession, the governors of the Church have, at any period of our history, been more tender of the rights of conscience, more willing to remove all restraints on the liberty of thinking and writing on subjects of religion, or who, with all the natural partiality for their own establishment, have entertained such enlarged and generous notions both of the justice and the policy of tolerating all who dissent from it, as far as can be done consistently with their own security, than those who now preside in it. Three from this order you are pleased to select, *who, you say, are already pledged to the public, and must be*

artis grammaticæ criticæque regulis consonam. Et hæc eadem velim sibi in memoriam revocent, qui LITURGIAM item recenseri reformarique flagitant. Ornatio quidem, accuratior, plenior, brevior, et potest ea fieri et debet: sed modestâ tractatione, sed tranquillis hominum animis; non temerariis, qualia vidimus et videmus, ausis, non inter media dissidia, mutuasque suspiciones.

Oratio Synodalis, anno 1761.

† Page 40.

*considered*

*considered as committed, in every sense, to bring forward a revision, having by their former applications on the subject, sixteen years since, borne witness to the necessity of the measure.\** The right reverend prelates, here alluded to, best know what the amount of their applications was, and how far the reform they aimed at was meant to extend. At that time, I was myself no incurious observer of what was passing; and with one of the three you mention had some interesting discourse on the subject; and I am confident from what he then declared, and from what I know and have heard of his principles since, he had not the most remote intention to introduce a correction of our service-book, such as that now meditated by you; and I think it very probable, were the matter examined to the bottom, the same might be said of the other two, whose names you have published. But there is a circumstance in this part of your pamphlet, where you are giving an account of the present set of our prelates, in which more is meant than meets the ear, and which I cannot well explain. After speaking, and with deserved respect, of the *late* Archbishop, you go

• Page 40.

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on thus: *Yet we have another Archbishop, (of Canterbury, I mean) whose character for wisdom and moderation, together with his knowledge of the world, intitle him so well to preside over, and set the example of, that fairness and temper of mind, without which a work of this nature can never be accomplished.\** Without dwelling on the observation that this sentence, faithfully copied from your book, is in its construction somewhat embarrassed, and not strictly conformable to the rules of grammar; it seems here that, under a compliment to one of our Metropolitans, an implied slight is meant to be insinuated concerning the other. The virtues of the present Archbishop of CANTERBURY admit of no accession of ornament from your eulogy, Sir, or mine: his Grace's reputation, deservedly acquired by passing through a variety of inferior stations in the Church, first raised him to the Bench, and then advanced him to the highest seat upon it, not more to the satisfaction of his own order than with the general approbation of all good men: And I am sure I shall have *his* leave to add, that we have yet *another* Archbishop, (of YORK, I mean) who, as next to

\* Page 40.

himself in place, is no less deserving of our highest respect and esteem. If this omission of civility on your part were designed to mortify the person against whom it is directed, (for you could not entertain a thought, that it would be at all regarded, and hardly noticed, by any one else) it has certainly missed of its aim; for if there be a man alive, who, meaning well and acting uprightly, is perfectly at ease as to the interpretation which malice or mistake may put upon his conduct, it is this venerable and learned prelate. And yet there have been times, in which he has for a moment laid aside his natural tranquillity; when he has been unjustly attacked himself, or, what affects him more, when the great principles of religion and government have been unjustly attacked in his presence: and by those, who have happened to be spectators of such a scene, I believe it will be allowed, that his assailant has had no cause to gratulate himself on his temerity.

Thus much I have allowed myself to say of our two excellent Metropolitans. As a clergyman of the Church of England, I owed them this tribute of respect and duty. And yet, Sir, let me assure you (for I know what a *Layman* is ready to suspect) that, if I had any personal favour to ask

or even to receive from either of them, or if I had not resolved to conceal my name from their notice, this tribute, small as it is, had not now been paid.

## XV.

I have now, Sir, brought my remarks on the HINTS, which you have thought proper to address to the Clergy, Nobility, and Gentry, Newly Associated, to their conclusion; in the course of which you cannot justly complain, that any one circumstance in your pamphlet has been treated by me with indifference or neglect; although I am far from certain others will not be of opinion, that neither your subject, nor your manner of treating it, were of that importance as to deserve so particular an answer as I have here bestowed upon them. The idea of the defective condition of certain parts of our religious service appears to have gained so entire possession of your mind, that you take for granted, no man of common understanding can any longer espouse them: but allow me to remind you, at parting, that the merits or demerits of the book of Common-Prayer are not to be ascertained from the reports of one



one or two peevish declaimers, who publish their invectives in news-papers or in pamphlets, and then try to convince the world that theirs is the common persuasion of every person of sense, whether of the Laity or Clergy; but are to be collected from the opinions of men of confessed learning and abilities, who, without concert with each other, have, professedly or incidentally, delivered their judgments concerning it: and we have seen that, if our Ritual be tried by this test, it would be easy to produce an army of Protestants, natives and foreigners, laymen and divines, (a few anomalous characters among the last excepted) who, from the first formation of the Liturgy to the present day, have uniformly deposed in its favour. So also as to a Revision, the recommending of which is the one great object of your Hints, this scheme seems to be so perpetually flitting before your fancy, that you can hardly refrain from calling on the people to exert their right, which you tell them they *legally may*, of demanding it; and, what many of your readers must often have smiled at, you *maintain, that it is giving up the true principles of religious liberty, if our Liturgy, Articles, &c. do not from time to time pass under a formal examination, even if NO-*

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THING *should be found alterable therein.*\* But here again I think I have shewn, that if a revisal were made, and were at all like any of those which have formerly taken place, it would by no means answer your end; and if it were carried farther, so as to affect the doctrines of the Church as they are now received, we could not consent to it without sin. It is possible, and even probable, there is no congregation of Christians, whose system of faith and worship has not in it defects and errors, which we do not entirely approve; and if we abstain from social worship till we find a society, which is in all things exactly of our opinion, we shall never join in social worship at all.

With this address, Sir, I mean that my literary intercourse with you shall begin and end. Other cares now call for my attention; cares, to which I have willingly devoted many of my years that are past, to which, by the grace of God, I hope to devote the small remainder that is yet for to come. But even in the present instance it will not be objected to me, by candid men, that I

\* Page 46, 47. It may be proper to observe, once for all, that the pages of the *Hints*, &c. are quoted from the *Second Edition*, the only one the author has seen.

have wandered from the duties of my profession ;  
if, at a time, when the national worship has  
been traduced as ill-founded and unscriptural,  
and the public ministers of religion have been ar-  
raigned as universally illiterate or insincere, I have  
been impelled by an honest indignation at such ca-  
lumnies to write an *Apology for the Liturgy and  
Clergy of the Church of England.*

T H E E N D.

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E R R A T A.

- Page 33, line 9 in the note, after *God*, instead of a full  
point, put a comma.  
35, line 6, for *propriety*, read *necessity*.  
44, line 2 from the bottom, instead of ——— to ten  
*bishops and twenty divines*, read ——— to thirty  
*divines, ten of whom were bishops*.  
78, line 16, for 1772, read 1779.



I, the undersigned, Clerk of the County of ... do hereby certify that the within and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original as the same appears from the records of the County of ...

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and the seal of the County of ... at the City of ... this ... day of ... 19...

Witness my hand and the seal of the County of ... at the City of ... this ... day of ... 19...

...

...

...

...

Richmond England Church of St. Andrew the Apostle